

T H E     A N N U A L     R E P O R T     (1909)

of the

MEDICAL     OFFICER     OF     HEALTH

for the

URBAN     DISTRICT     OF     SHANKLIN.

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Gentlemen,

During the past year there have been registered within your district seventy-five (75) births : forty-seven (47) Males and twenty-eight (28) Females.

Five (5) of these children were of illegitimate birth, viz., four (4) boys and one (1) girl. The illegitimate birth-rate is therefore sixty-six (66) per 1000 births registered.

The actual birth-rate is 14.8 per 1000 of population, which is 2.8 per 1000 more than was registered last year. While, however, the birth-rate is 2.8 per 1000 more than last year (when it was exceptionally low, even for this district), it has just reached about the average for your district, which is habitually very much below the birth-rate of the country generally. One obvious reason for this low birth-rate is that a very considerable number of old people find their way here to spend their declining years. Whether this is the sole cause of low birth-rate, it is very difficult to say.

There have been during the past year registered within this district fifty-two (52) deaths, consisting of exactly the same number of Males and Females, namely, twenty-six (26) of each. There occurred the deaths of two people in public institutions



within your district, and these have to be subtracted, but against this there were three deaths of Shanklin inhabitants in public institutions situated without the district, and these latter have to be added to the total above mentioned. That is, these corrections make a nett increase of one, which brings the annual deaths for the past year up to fifty-three (53). This latter renders the death-rate of your district 10.4 per 1000 of population, and this, according to the directions given in the statistical tables of the Local Government Board, is the correct death-rate of the district. I may, however, mention that during the past year five (5) casual visitors died while staying here. If these were deducted from the deaths of residents, the number of deaths would fall to 48, or a death-rate of 9.5 per 1000. However, taken at the higher figure, the death-rate is a very low one.

From the point of view of age, the deaths have occurred as follows :

Under 1 year	5 deaths
Over 1 year and under 5 years	2 ..
,, 5 years ,, ,, 15 ,,	3 ..
,, 15 ,, ,, 25 ,,	3 ..
,, 25 ,, ,, 65 ,,	11 ..
,, 65 ,,	<u>28</u> ..
Total	<u>52</u> ..

It will be observed that of the total deaths, considerably more than half consist of people over 65 years of age.

As to causation, the various deaths were attributable to the following diseases or causes :

Diseases of the Heart	12 deaths
Cerebral haemorrhage (apoplexy)	5 ..





Bronchitis	4 deaths
Phthisis Pulmonalis	4 ,,
Debility from birth	3 ,,
Chronic Cystitis	3 ,,
Cancer	3 ,,
Senile decay	2 ,,
Alcoholism	2 ,,
Tubercular Meningitis	2 ,,
Infantile convulsions	2 ,,
Bright's Disease	1 death
Membranous croup	1 ,,
Uterine fibroids	1 ,,
Tubercular enteritis	1 ,,
Chronic suppuration of the ear	1 ,,
Myasthenia gravis	1 ,,
Gall stones	1 ,,
Diabetes	1 ,,
Addison's Disease	1 ,,
Pneumonia	1 ,,
Total	<u>52</u> ,,

It will be observed that as a cause of death, Diseases of the Heart rank very easily first ; in fact, it ranks more than twice as numerous as any other cause. For the two preceding years diseases of the heart and cancer claimed about the same number, but during 1909 the deaths from the latter disease were only three in number. Considering that many of the deaths registered as due to heart disease are people of very advanced age, it must be borne in mind that very many such cases might quite as





correctly be classed under the heading of senile decay. The death-rate from cancer during the past year is very much lower than usual for this district, which, on the average, is practically the same as for the country generally.

It will be noticed that Bronchitis and Pneumonia have together only accounted for five deaths, which fact goes to indicate a very favourable climatic influence where these respiratory ailments are concerned.

There have been four deaths from Phthisis as compared with three in the preceding year. There were no deaths registered as due to Influenza, and the only death due to any zymotic disease was one of Membranous Croup. During the past year there was no epidemic of any notifiable disease within the district.

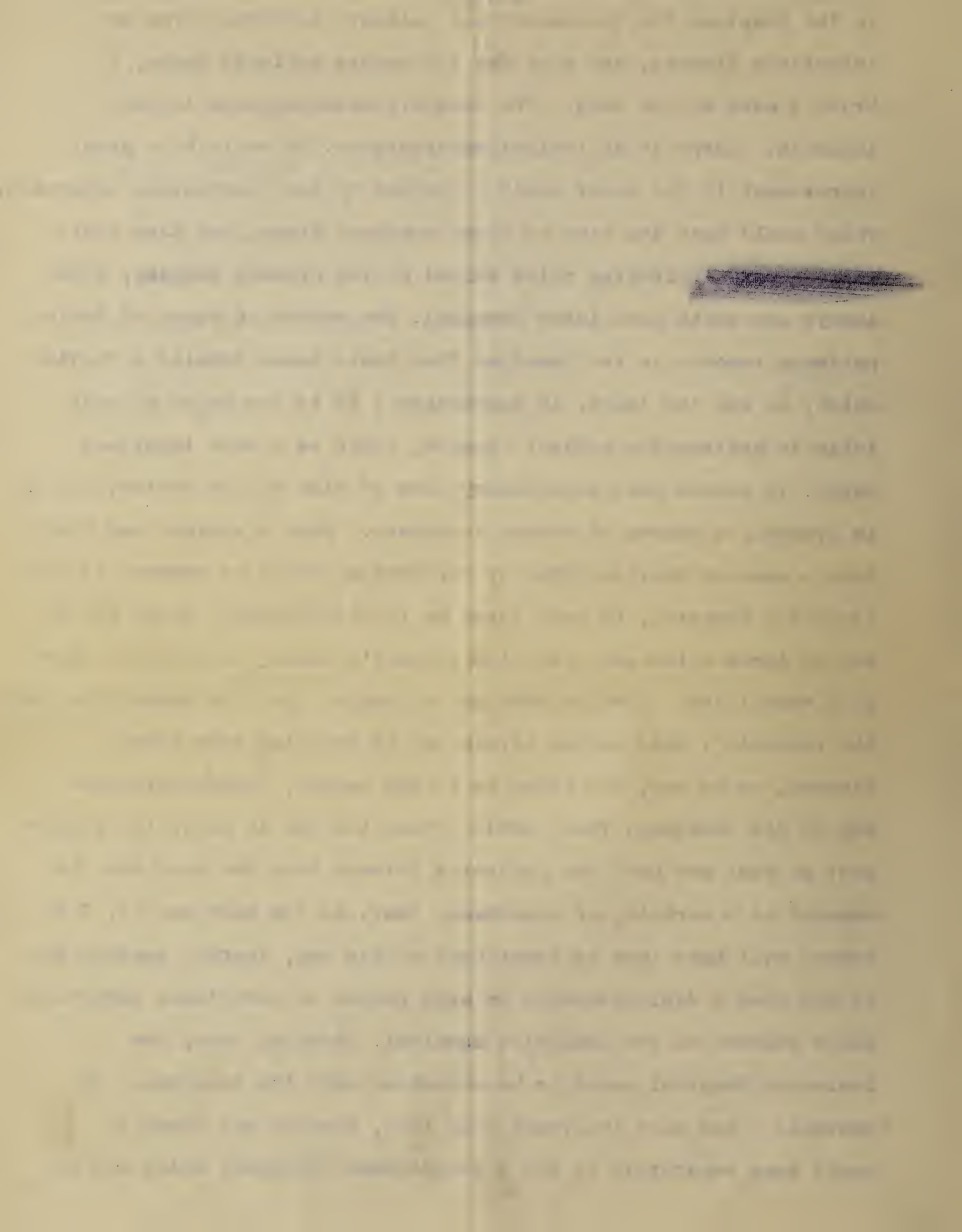
There was notified to me as Medical Officer of Health twelve cases of Scarlet Fever and five of Diphtheria. These latter all occurred within a month of each other, viz., from June 29th onwards. The cases of Scarlet Fever, on the contrary, were distributed over the first six months of the year, viz., two each in January and February, one in March, four in April, one in May, and two in June.

When on the subject of Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever, I may refer to the Isolation Hospital of the conjoined Board of Shanklin and Sandown. In my last annual report I pointed out that one ward at the above Hospital was divided by a partition, which allowed the admission of adult patients of different sexes, but that the other ward was not so divided. This condition still maintains, and I need, I hope, hardly point out that this is a very undesirable state of affairs. When I point out that there is only one bath





in the Hospital for the use of all patients suffering from any infectious disease, and also for the nurses employed there, I trust I need say no more. The lavatory accommodation is not adequate. There is no fumigating apparatus. It would be a great improvement if the water could be pumped by some mechanical apparatus, which would save the time of those employed there, and also would avoid a very irritating noise caused by the present pumping, which annoys any acute case in the Hospital. The method in vogue of having patients removed to the Hospital from their homes entails a routine which, to say the least, is cumbersome ; it is the cause of much delay in getting the patient removed, which is a most important point. It causes much unnecessary loss of time to the doctor, and it is probably a source of danger to others. When a medical man finds that a case of Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria should be removed to the Isolation Hospital, he must first go to the Hospital, which may be two or three miles away from the patient's house, and find if there is a vacant bed. Then he must go to Lake to find the person who does the removals ; this latter person may be removing some other disease, or he may, and often is in the summer, driving visitors out in his carriage. Then, having found the man at Lake, the doctor must go back and tell the patient's friends that the case will be removed at a certain, or uncertain, hour, as the case may be. The doctor will have lost at least half of his day, thereby engendering in his mind a disinclination to urge people to have their infectious cases removed to the Isolation Hospital. Firstly, then, the Isolation Hospital ought to be connected with the telephone, if possible ; but more important than that, Sandown and Shanklin ought each separately to buy a second-hand brougham, which can be





got for a few pounds, and keep it at one of the posting yards exclusively for removing patients to the Isolation Hospital, and the Inspector of the Council could see to the proper and efficient disinfection of it after it has been used.

#### WATER SUPPLY.

I conclude that at last, after very prolonged negotiation, you have really acquired the Chillerton water supply for your district, and that it only now remains to get the necessary work carried out at Chillerton and lay the water mains to Shanklin. All that I now wish to say on this subject is that I trust that you, as a Sanitary Authority, will do all in your power to expedite the completion of this work, for it will be a great relief to all conversant with the needs of your district when the Chillerton water scheme has been completed.

During the past year I have received complaints as to the condition of the water supplied to houses in the northern part of your district. The complainants noticed that the water was frequently very turbid, and contained a liberal supply of animal life, which was very evident without the use of a microscope.

#### DRAINAGE AND SANITATION.

During the past year the usual routine inspection of the sanitary condition of dwelling houses has been carried out, besides any others which demanded special attention. In the course of these inspections, sanitary defects were found in 28 premises,

and these were all rectified. During the past twelve months fifteen Sanitary Certificates were granted, of which number nine were new Certificates.





The main drainage of the district has given rise to no trouble during the past year. It has been a year with an exceptionally large rainfall. The drains and sewers must have been well flushed almost throughout the year, so that the only trouble that would have been likely to arise would have been the bursting of a sewer where there is not also a storm-water system.

Although it has been a year in which water has been super-abundant, I regret to say that the lavatories at the Parochial Schools have been a source of dissatisfaction owing to deficient flushing. I trust that you will be able to make an arrangement whereby this defect is remedied during the present year. While speaking of the Parochial Schools, I may mention that there are Piggeries in the immediate vicinity which are frequently a danger not only to the children at the Schools, but also a danger and nuisance to inhabitants in that neighbourhood. This brings me to the consideration of certain SLAUGHTER HOUSES in this same neighbourhood. At the rear of the Parochial Schools there is a Recreation Ground now daily used by children and young people. This ground you were instrumental in obtaining, and yet, I regret to say, that the Slaughter Houses at the lower end of this ground are not only a nuisance but a very real danger, and frequently the cause of illness in children frequenting that ground. This is the more to be regretted, as there is a public footpath passing close by these slaughter-houses, which footpath is very much frequented in summer. On one occasion, when I went to inspect the place, I found it impossible to go more than half-way down the playing ground without being overpowered by the stench from this insanitary place. There can be not the least doubt but that





these slaughter-houses ought to be removed entirely, I have written about this objectionable place before, and I sincerely trust that you will now take active steps to have this danger to public health removed.

#### COWSHEDS, DAIRIES, and MILKSHOPS.

The milk shops and dairies which are located within the district are well kept and properly appointed. In the last few years the handling of milk has greatly improved. At the same time, one must admit that compared with countries like Denmark and Holland, we are still in this respect in a primitive condition, and when it is as fully realised as it should be by the general public, what a very important matter it is for milk to be handled in a thoroughly scientific manner, we will then get still greater care taken to avoid even the possibility of any contamination of milk from without.

The cowsheds have improved, and some are being re-built, but still I think that cowsheds might, and ought to be, better kept as to general cleanliness. This latter remark applies to the smaller cowsheds ; the larger ones are very well kept and looked after.

The periodic veterinary examination of dairy cows is certainly a great boon, and I now find that some cow-keepers are having their cows examined at their own expense. That is to say, they pay the veterinary surgeon to make frequent periodic inspections, and also have the cows tested for tuberculosis. This is undoubtedly a great safeguarding of the public health, especially as regards children, and one which I hope will become universal in all districts.





## SCAVENGING.

I am glad to say that the scavenging of the district was efficiently carried out last year. I practically had no complaints on this score. The only point I would dwell upon in this respect is that the refuse buckets put out into the Station Road might with advantage be cleared earlier in the day, especially during the summer.

## FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS and LAUNDRIES.

There is nothing in the nature of what is usually considered as a factory in this district. Such as come under that category are Printers, Mineral-water Manufacturers, Carpenters' Shops, Whitesmiths, Blacksmiths, and Locksmiths. There are, of course, the Laundries which come under Workshops. However, with few exceptions, these places only employ two or three workpeople. There is no manufacture of any kind which is in itself prejudicial to health. The places are all sufficiently, and mostly well, ventilated, and over-crowding does not occur. Where any fault has to be found it is practically always a deficiency of general cleanliness, and the periodic cleansing and white-washing of interiors ; when pointed out, shortcomings are attended to.

There is no underground, or partly underground, Bake-house within the district. There is tardiness in attention to the law which demands the proper affixing of a copy of the Workshops Act.

## SYSTEMATIC MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

As applied to the Shanklin District, it has come under my notice that the systematic medical examination of children has revealed the fact that without such examination a considerable number





of children would be attending school with certain physical defects, rendering their teaching difficult and laborious, both for themselves and their teachers, and placing the children so suffering at a very great disadvantage. Many a child so suffering would naturally be looked upon as stupid, whereas the cause is some defect of vision, hearing, or other defective condition of health.

#### METEOROLOGY.

The chief meteorological feature of the past year was the excessive rainfall, especially during the last seven months of the year, which may be said to have culminated in October, when we had the unprecedented rainfall of 10 inches one month. With the exception of March, the rainfall of the first five months was small. Along with a heavy rainfall (viz., 13½ inches more than in the preceding year), we experienced a somewhat cold summer, the temperature especially falling below the average in the evenings. With the exception of a fortnight in August and a portion of May, we had little real summer weather. The total hours of sunshine for the year fell 107 below our average. I find that in Shanklin we average very close upon six hours of sunshine per day throughout the year. So far as your meteorological observations go, I find that during the summer, the average maximum shade temperature is 69 degrees F., and the average minimum about 57 deg., to 58 deg. F., whereas in the winter the average maximum is about 45 deg., to 46 deg. F. in the shade, and the average minimum about 35 deg., to 36 deg. F.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

*John Cowper M.P. &c.*

*Ed: Off Heath*

